

Message Text

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64

ACTION AF-18

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USIA-15 EB-11 DRC-01 /105 W
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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9705
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

UNCLAS PRETORIA 1698

E.O. 11652 : N/A

TAGA: PINT, SF

SUBJECT: VORSTER CRITICIZED FOR STATEMENTS HE MADE
IN BUCKLEY TV INTERVIEW.

1. PRESS REPORTS OF VORSTER'S TV INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM BUCKLEY AND SABC BROADCAST OF SOME OF THEIR DIALOGUE HAVE HAD REVERBERATIONS IN SA. VORSTER'S POLITICAL OPPONENTS AND ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PRESS HAVE SHARPLY REBUKED HIM FOR SOME OF HIS REMARKS. AFRIKAANS PRESS CONSPICUOUSLY HAS NOT MADE ANY MENTION OF TV INTERVIEW, MUCH LESS COMMENTED ON SUBSTANCE OF WHAT VORSTER SAID.

2. CRITICISM HAS FOCUSED ON THE MOST EGREGIOUS OF THE REMARKS VORSTER MADE: A) IN GENERAL, EMPLOYEES IN SA CAN FIRE LAZY WHITES AND REPLACE THEM WITH BLACKS. B) DISCRIMINATION IN WAGES AND SALARIES IS BASED ON DIFFERENCES IN SKILLS RATHER THAN SKIN COLOR. C) ONLY PEOPLE FOUND TO BE WORKING OR SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF COMMUNISM ARE BANNED. D) BANNED PERSONS ARE TOLD WHY THEY HAVE BEEN BANNED AND CAN EASILY APPEAL THEIR BANNING.

3. COMMENT: ONE NEWSPAPER, PRETORIA NEWS, SAID: " WHAT A
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DIFFERENT PICTURE MIGHT HAVE EMERGED IF THE PRIME MINISTER

HAD BEEN INTERVIEWED NOT BY A MAN OBVIOUSLY LACKING
DETAILED KNOWLEDGE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCENE, BUT BY A
FOEMAN WORTHY OF HIS STEEL--BY, SAY, MRS. HELEN SUZMAN.
EVEN SIR DE VILLIERS GRAAFF SHOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TEAR
HIM TO PIECES." ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PRESS HAD A HOST OF
OPPONENTS, LIKE MRS. SUZMAN, ARE MISSING NO OPPORTUNITY TO
POINT OUT VORSTER'S ERRORS AND INCONSISTENCIES. BUT HIS
STATEMENTS WERE AIMED AT AND REACHED AN AMERICAN AUDIENCE,
AND NOTHING HIS CRITICS DO IN SOUTH AFRICA CAN CHANGE THAT.
AND BY IGNORING THE ISSUE HERE HE WILL RELEGATE IT TO LIMBO,
FOR IT IS NOT LIKELY TO HAVE ANY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT AND IN
TIME WILL LARGELY BE FORGOTTEN.
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